BIBLIOTHECA RODERIANA

An Earneſt EXHORTATION TO ALL PEOPLE TO CONSIDER Seriouſly the afflicting HAND of Almighty GOD;

In the Diſtemper, now raging among the horned CATTLE, in many parts of this Kingdom.

WITH

PRAYERS ſuitable to the Melancholy Occaſion.

Printed in the Year, 1754.

Price Two Pence, or twelve Shillings a Hundred to thoſe who buy them to give away.

Courteous Reader,

If you do not think theſe weighty Conſiderations are worth the Price, keep it clean and return it when call'd for.

4.

AN EARNEST

EXHORTATION,

To all People, to conſider, &c.

A NATIONAL Calamity requires a National Repentance, and Reformation, before we can be reſtored to the Divine Favour, and ſhall a peſtilential Diſeaſe rage among our Cattle, ſweeping away without controul ſo many Thouſands! And by its long continuance, ſeem to threaten their utter deſtruction! And we the Peopleof this nation to go on in our Sins, without calling our ways to Remembrance, or conſidering that it is the afflicting hand of Almighty God? Shall the deſtroying Angel be let looſe upon our Cattle, and can we behold the Slaughter he has already mad , without conſidering that God's Judgments are in the Earth? Have our Sins taken ſuch hold of us, to make us daily with the Almighty's diſpleaſure, and to hold out againſt God when his hand is upon us? If ſo then is our Caſe moſt deſperate, and condition deplorable.

The Almighty might, perhaps, deſign this correction to be medicinal, to be only a loving correction, to draw us off from our darling Sins, and beloved Vices; to be no more than a paternal Chaſtiſement to bring us to better obedience: But if when the afflicting hand of the Lord is upon

us, we labour not to find out the cauſe of this Viſitation; if we make no enquiries whence it is, or what hath moved or provoked the Lord to this manner of Proceeding with us, if we will not ſit down and make diligent ſearch, but to ſtop our Ears to God's voice, and obſtinately perſiſt in our ſinful courſes; what can we expect, but that the Lord ſhould pour out upon us the Vials of his Wrath, that he will enlarge the commiſſion of the deſtroying Angel, to cut off Man, as well as Beaſt. Woe be to that Nation, upon whom the gentle Chaſtiſements of the Lord, make no Impreſſions! To that People who will not be reclaimed by his loving corrections! To that Land, which ſtriveth with the Almighty!

Famine, Sword, and Peſtilence, are the three great evils ſo often threaten'd by the Prophets of old, and many times executed upon wicked and ſtubborn, rebellious and incorrigble nations, Cities and People; and if the Lord pleaſe not to withdraw from us this ſore Diſeaſe, which rages among our Cattle, we have juſt reaſon to dread the Iſſue. To ſtrive againſt the Almighty, when his afflicting hand is upon us, is a God-provoking Sin! It is a dangerous and preſumptuous Sin! The power and dominion of God, over the whole Creation, is abſolute, and uncontroulable; He can kill and make alive, he can turn our plenty into Scarcity, and our abundance into famine: He can cauſe to eat our bread by weight, and with care to drink Water by meaſure, and with Aſtoniſhment for our Iniquities. *Ezek. iv.* 16. Take we heed then,

then, that we provoke not the Lord, by obſtinate Stupidity, and carnal Inſenſibility, to turn our delicious dainties into a coarſe diet; our plenty into Scarcity, and our Bleſſiings into curſes.

This nation hath long enjoy'd the bleſſing of Plenty. The Lord hath not dealt out to us ſcanty portions, or niggardly pittances, but full meaſure preſs'd down, heap'd up, and running over. We have had many great and good harveſts; our Gardens have been fill'd with all manner of ſtore; our Oxen have been ſtrong to labour, and our Sheep have brought forth thouſands, and Ten thouſands. The Land we live in, might juſtly be compar'd to a paradice, while others, perhaps, leſs wicked than ourſelves, have liv'd in a barren Soil, a deſert, or a Wilderneſs. We have liv'd long in all manner of plenty; but if we will not hearken to God's voice in this Viſitation, we may e'er long feed upon a coarſe diet; hunger will make meat of any thing. Mallows and Juniper-roots may go down, when hunger hath thoroughly whet the Appetite. It is reported of Darius the Perſian Emperor, that being in extreme heat and thirſt, after his overthrow by Alexander, he was glad of a cup puddle-water, and ſaid, It was the moſt pleaſant draught he had in his Life. Take we heed then to call upon the Lord in due time, to ſeek him whilſt he may be found, leſt we ſin away our plenty, and be forc'd to accept of ſcarcity for abundance. God may juſtly bring that People to eat Mallows and Juniper-roots, and drink puddle-water, who wanton in the Uſe

of their delicious meats and full tables, and forget the author of all the good things, they enjoy. We read of a famine in Samaria, 2 *Kings*, *vi.* 25. There an Aſs's head was ſold for fourſcore pieces of Silver. The fleſh of an Aſs (beſides it's being unclean to the Jews) was but ſorry food; yet famine made it ſweet tho' coarſe, much tho' little, and cheap tho' dear. Hiſtory informs us, that rats, mice, cats, dogs, *&c.* have in times of great diſtreſs been the food of mankind; and that ſome were driven to that extremity, to eat thoſe things that are an abomination to nature. Thus ſeverely hath the Lord dealt out his Judgments to other nations. God grant that we may perceive and know the things that make for our peace before they be forever hid from our Eyes.

To convince us, that nothing leſs than the afflicting hand of an angry God, is the ſole cauſe of this ſore Viſitation; we have ſeen all human means baffled. Watch and ward hath been kept, bounds and limits have been ſet for the driving of Cattle, to prevent the ſpreading of this ſore diſeaſe; yet what hath this availed, we ſtill ſee the contagion ſpreading itſelf, and to our great ſurpriſe and aſtoniſhment, ſkipping many miles at once, from one town to another, from one herd to another; where no propable conjecture could be made, nor any human reaſon aſſigned for its ſo doing. An order of council hath been iſſued, requiring all Farmers Cow-keepers, *&c.* as ſoon as they perceive any marks or ſigns of the diſtemper upon their Cattle, to ſhoot them dead; to bury the

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dead carceſſes of all infected Cattle, four foot deep within the Earth, having firſt cut and flaſh'd the hide, in ſeveral places, ſo as to render the ſame of no uſe, Pitch, Tar, Roſin, Gun-powder, and other combuſtibles, have been ordered to be burnt in thoſe places where the infected Cattle have died, or been ſhot; vinegar and warm water, alſo to waſh places clear of the infection: And a reward annex'd to theſe Regulations, for all thoſe who could make proof of their having comply'd with, and duly obſerv'd them. Theſe are the means which human prudence teacheth us to uſe: Common means may do well, may and ought to be uſed, but when common and ordinary means will not do, it is high time to conſider. Something is certainly amiſs, when God viſits out of the common Way. We may ſet bounds to the driving of Cattle, to prevent the ſpreading of the Infection; but all in vain, when God hath ſign'd the Commiſſion of the deſtroying Angel. We may watch and ward, but if the Lord keep not the City, the watchmen wake but in vain. We may make ſpeedy haſte to bury the dead carcaſſes of the diſtemper'd Cattle, in hopes to ſtop the progreſs of the Infection; but how fruitleſs are all endeavours to retard the peſtilence which walketh in darkneſs. It is not in the power of Vinegar and warm water to waſh off an Infection, wherewith we waſh with ſinful and polluted hands. Neither can Pitch, Tar, Roſin, Gunpowder, nor all the conbuſtibles we can muſter, purify or ſcreen from Infection, a People laden with Iniquity. Thus have we ſeen the power of the Almighty, manifeſted in the Overthrow of all human means. But

But if, after all our watchings and wardings, our washings and purifyings are baffled, we cannot for the hardneſs of our hearts be convinced, that it is the afflicting hand of the Almighty; we have had ſtill further means of conviction. How many receipts have been publiſhed for the cure of this malady, to no purpoſe? How many heads and hands have been at work, in hopes to find out a Noſtrum, to cure this diſeaſe? Or what reward would have been thought ſufficient for him, who had found out remedy to ſtop the progreſs of this Infection? But it is not in the power of Chymiſtry to extract an Oil, or the depth of Learning to preſcribe a Medicine, or in all far-fetch'd drugs to heal or reſtore, when our ſins cry aloud for Vengance All medicine loſes its ſanative Virtue, when our ſins ſets us at a diſtance from God; on the contrary, when the Lord will preſerve his faithful ſervants, it is not the heat of a burning fiery furnace can hurt them. When the Almighty will deliver his beloved people, he can make the liquid water aſſume the property of the Earth, and ſtand on an heap. No ſooner is the Almighty Fiat iſſued, but a rude Chaos ranges into aſtoniſhing order. Thus we ſee what omnipotence can do! Thus have we ſeen the love he beareth to his faithful and righteous ſervants! Thus have we ſeen the inſufficiency of all human aids! Why then, ſhould vain ſinful man any longer dally with the Almighty's diſpleaſure? Why then ſhould rebellious man ſhut his eyes and ſtop his ears to God's voice, which ſpeaks aloud in this ſore Viſitation.

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The neighbouring nations have not only been fellow-ſuffe:s in this calamity, but they have likewiſe been viſited with huge Locuſts, thoſe mighty armies of the Lord, and do we think ourſelves leſs wicked than they? Let us then take heed, we do not harden ourſelves againſt God, and provoke him to quarter upon us that innumerable train, not only of Locuſts, but of Frogs, Lice, Caterpillars, *&c.* leaſt they crop our harveſt in the Bud, and eat up every green herb.

Surely it is high time to call our ſins to remembrance, to make diligent ſearch what hath moved or provoked the Lord to this manner of proceeding with us! Then ſhall we no longer wonder we are afflicted, but rather ſtand amazed, that we are not utterly conſumed! For, as plowing and ſeed-time are an earneſt of harveſt, ſo certainly doth the Lord viſit us for our offences. Sin is commonly the cauſe of ſuffering, and chaſtiſement for amendment, therefore to go on in ſinning, when God is chaſtening, is to add rebellion to ſin. It was the brand of Ahaz, 2 *Chron xxiii.* 22. In the time of his diſtreſs, he treſpaſſed yet more againſt the Lord. God forbid this nation ſhould copy after his example? The Almighty, in his great wiſdom, frequently ſuits the puniſhment to the ſin; he makes as it were a looking glaſs of our puniſhments, and therein gives us a ſight of our ſins. Let us then conſider this calamity as a publick vices. The ſodomites had a fire of unnatural luſt burning in them, and God ſent a fire from Heaven, and deſtroy'd them. David had defil'd his neighbours wife, therefore ſaith the Lord, I will take thine wives from before thine eyes, and give them to thy neighbour, and he ſhall lye with thy wives in the ſight of the Sun,

2 *Sam* xii. 11. again the Lord tells him, Thou haſt ſlain Uriah with the ſword of the children of Ammon; therefore the ſword ſhall never depart from thine houſe. Thus we ſee, as ſin and ſuffering go together, ſo ſin and ſuffering are ſuited together. The Bedignity of his nature, will not permit him to take delight in our deſtreſſes; he doth not afflict willingly, or grieve the children of men; therefore, whenever he adminiſters a bitter Cup, we may be ſure, the ingredients are medicinal, and ſuch as our infirmities require. He dare not truſt our Appetites with unmixt pleaſures, leſt they engender ſome fatal diſeaſe in our Souls.

Theſe hints and examples may help us in our enquiry, what thoſe vices probably are, which have provoked the Lord to viſit us with this diſeaſe among our Cattle. It is to be fear'd then, that our long abuſe of god's mercies, and the ill uſe of our plenty, have largely contributed to draw down this diſpleaſure of the Almighty; That our exceſſes, our gluttony and intemperance, are no ſmall ingredients in this Malady. Theſe diſqualify us for the performance of all Chriſtian duaies! Theſe make us both unfit to exerciſe charity towards men or piety towards god! We cannot ſerve god and Mammon. Proſperity and plenty, are of ſuch an intoxicating quality to heighten our pride, as none but thoſe who keep the ſtricteſt guard can withſtand, theſe lull us aſleep, and amuſe us with pleaſant dreams, and idle fancies; whilſt Satan in the mean time, rifles our treaſure, and by the deceitful charms of ſin, robs us of our innocence and happineſs at once. And herein doth god (as it were) perform a friendly office for men, to rouſe us and make us apprehenſive of our danger, before our utter Ruin approaches. This is certainly, the Errand on which our Afflictions are ſent; ſo that if

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we rightly conſider, we have Reaſon to look on them as our confederates, who intend our reſcue, by giving the Alarm. In all our Afflictions, it highly concerns us, nicely and critcally to obſerve, whether we have not ſome correſponding Guilt, which anſwers to the Puniſhment. The very heathen mariners could rebuke Jonah in a Storm, for not calling upon his God, *Jonah*, i. 6. And that juſt god, who does all things in Number, weight and Meaſure, doubtleſs obſerves a Symmetry and proportion in our puniſhments; and adapts them not only to the heinouſneſs, but alſo to the very kind of our Crimes. If we uſe our plenty to exceſs, it is but juſt with god to abridge our plenty; and if the Abridgement of our plenty make us not ſeek to him by Repentance and Amendment, his power can humble our Stubbornneſs to the duſt, *Can thine Hands be ſtrong in the Day that I ſhall deal with the*, ſaid the Lord, *Ezek.* xxii. 14. Therefore, ſince the deſign of our Afflictions is, our Repentance and Amendment, it is god's wiſe and gracious diſpoſal of them, to point out thoſe partucular ſins which moſt offend him; nay, it is one of the higheſt Inſtances of god's love and clemency to us; thus to project our Reducement, by attacking us in our plenty!

And as our proſperity and ſucceſs, our plenty and abundance, adminiſter Fuel to our intemperance; ſo have they in like manner, a great Influance to highten our pride; he that reflects but a little, may diſcern the daily progreſs of this evil; he that compares our reigning pride with that of thirty or forty years paſt, will eaſily be convinced, that this Vice muſt have its ſhare in drawing down this Viſitation. pride, Inſincerity, and a proper profuſeneſs of inſincere compliments, are the faſhionable attainments, and blandiſhments of our modern converſation; and how is the modeſty of our young Females betray'd by the

unſeemly and immodeſt attire of the preſent Age. Nay, to ſuch a height is our pride advanc'd (notwithſtanding god's frequent and ſolemn declarations, how hateful it is in his ſight) that it has now many Advocates and abettors, who are redy with much aſſurance to plead and alledge its uſefulneſs to the public good; but if this inſinuation muſt be allowed we may by the ſame argument defend drunkenneſs, and plead for many other Vices as neceſſary Evils; ſuch malignity is there in this Inſinuation, to make us fall in with that wicked Maxim lately advanc'd, that private Vices are public beneſits. Such are the miſchievous conſequences of pride, that it will keep no bounds, neither will it be kept by any; it makes us unwilling to acknowledge god's marcies in plenty, or ſeek him in Affliction; and Pharoah-like, we cry out when god's hand upon us, who is the Lord, that I ſhould obey him? I know not the Lord! Here the pride of Pharoah was productive of unbelief, and it's Effects are the ſame to this Doy. The proud man mindeth not god, neither in what he enjoyeth, not what he ſuffereth; nay, we oblige him to uſe Extremities, to put us in preſs of Afflictions, before we will yield him any obedience; to exchange our plenty for ſcarcity, e'er we will acknowledge hi Sovereignty: and we had nee take care, we don't provoke him to pronounce that Sentance againſt us, which he once did upon his beloved Iſrael, becauſe thou ſervedſt not the Lord thy god, with gladneſs and joyfulneſs of heart, for the abundance of all things, therefore ſhalt thou ſerve thine Enemies, whom the Lord god will ſend among thee in hunger and thirſt, and in nakedneſs, and want of all things, Deut. xxviii, 27, 28, So apparent it is, that our Cala-

Calamities for the moſt part trace the Foot-ſteps of our Sins.

But we have ſtill a further Aggrevation of our National guilt, which doubtleſs is as diſpleaſing to the Almighty, as our luxurious Intemperance, our Pride and Vanity. Prophane Curſing and Swearing is a Sin which ha diffus'd itſelf among people of all Ranks and ſtations, and to our ſhame be it ſpoken, the very Children it our ſtreets, who have learnt but a ſmall ſhare of their Mother-Tongue, ſeem by their bold Utteranc of blaſphemous Oaths, to haae this picked Practice more grounded in them, than any Rudiments of the Chriſtian Religion.

To what then ſhail this deluge of Impiety, this general depravity be attributed? The laws of our land are as ſtrong, and as good, as can be made, to puniſh this vice of prophane curſing and ſwearing, or any other enormity, in people of all ranks and conditions whatever, none are exemt from puniſhment, and the puniſhment ſuited and adopted to their ſtation; and yet this wicked cuſtom ſtill prevails: And altho' it cannot be alledged againſt all, as God forbid it ſhould, that they have been actually guilty of the ſin of prophane curſing and ſwearing; yet do we ſome meaſure pertake of their guilt, by a ſinful connivance; for it is the duty of all, if we expect to ſtand clear in our accounts, before the tremendous majeſty of God, who is jealous of his honour; do what in us lies, by our advice and council, to admoniſh all offenders of their danger, by continuing in the ſin of prophaning God's holy name. Thus ſhall we acquit ourſelves of pertaking in the ſin of the prophane ſwearers; and thro' God's bleſſing, be the means of averting thoſe judgmects, which are due to our national Impiety and profaneſs.

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To proceed to a distinct enumeration and enlargement of all the publick vices, would exceed the bounds of the present design. Doubtless every considering man too sensibly perceives the growth of sin, and decay of Christain piety in this nation. It has been remarked by a late pious Bishop, that "General and crying sins of a nation if not prevented by a serious and general repentance, never escape publick Judgments. God may (saith he) defer his wrath for a time, and give a people space for repentance, he may stay 'till the iniquities of a nation be full and ripe, but sooner or later, his vengence will overtake them," Thus much may suffice to put us in mind of our duty, in considering this distemper as a national or publick calamity.

And as this distemper has been consider'd as a publick calamity, so ought it to be consider'd as a personal or private affliction, upon all those who have had the hard lot to be more than common sharers in it, by the loss of their Cettle; man is born to trouble, as the sparks fly upward, and all the certainty we have of the good things of this life is, that they are altogether uncertain. In the course of God's providence, we see there is no station ever so great, can be said to be secure and exempt from trouble; even the Kings and mighty monarchs of the Earth, have their dominions invaded, plunder'd, and taken from them.

Patience and Resignation are the Armour we should put on in the Days of Adversity; by these divine arts, we shall be able to unsting all our Afflictions, and deprive them of their Malignity and venemous particles. All our Murmurings and Repinings, all uneasiness and discontent, will only help to increase our Burden, until we have moulded ourselves into that temper of mind, that we can truly say, *It is the Lord*

Lord, let him do what ſeemeth him good. Let us ſet before us the Example of holy *Job*, who after he had patiently heard the ill News of the Loſs of his Sheep, his Oxen, and all his outward ſubſtance, receives the Meſſage of the Death of all his Children, in the following Words, *Naked* (ſaith he) *came I out of my Mother's Womb, and naked ſhalll I return; the Lord hath given, and the Lord hath taken away, bleſſed be the Name of the LORD.* Satan, no doubt, was now in full expectation to ſee *Job* overwhelmed with Grief, and hear him blaſpheme God's Name; but inſtead of blaſpheming, *Job* bleſſed and praiſed the Lord: This bleſſing and praiſing God in Trouble, gave Satan a deeper ſting, than all the Deprivations of outward Comforts had given *Job*. To praiſe and bleſs God in Adverſity, is the Touch-ſtone of ſincerity; to bleſs with tee Tongue without the Heart, is but a tinking Cymbal; to bleſs with the Heart, makes ſweet, tho' ſtill muſick, but when the Tongue and Heart join in Concert, in bleſſing and praiſing God, that Harmony fills and delights both Heaven and Earth.

A Prayer for a Perſon under Affliction

O Moſt gracious God! who doſt not afflict willingly, nor grieve the Children of Men, I flee unto thee for Comfort and Support under the Troubles thou haſt laid upon me: I know aſſuredly that this is thy hand, and that thou, O Lord, haſt done it. I acknowledge thy Judgments are right, and that thou of very Faithfulneſs haſt cauſed me to be troubled, and that my ſins have deſerv'd more than now I ſuffer. I am fully convinced, that the Events of this Life are not left to Chance or Uncertainty, but are all under the ſteady and wiſe Diſpoſal of thy good Providence. Hear me, O Lord, for thy Mercy's Sake, and for the Sake of thy only Son Jeſus Chriſt, our only Mediator, and Advocate. *Amen.*

A Prayer to be uſed during the Diſtemper among the Cattle.

O Gracious God! who in thy great Bounty to Mankind, haſt given them the Beeſts of the Field for their Proviſion and Nouriſhment, continue to us, we humbly beſeech thee, this Bleſſing, and ſuffer us not to be reduced to Scarcity and Diſtreſs by the contagious Diſtemper which has raged, and ſtill rages, among the horned Cattle, in many Parts of this Kingdom. In this, and all other thy diſpenſations towards us, we ſee and adore the Juſtice of thy providence, and do with ſorrowful and Penitent hearts, confeſs that our manifold vices and Impieties have deſervedly provoked thine Anger and Indignation againſt us. But we earneſtly intreat thee, Almighty Father, in this our calamitous State, look down upon us with an Eye of Pity and Compaſſion; and if it be thy bleſſed Will, to forbid the ſpreading of this ſore Viſitation, and in thy good Time, remove it from all the Inhabitants of this Land; for the Sake of thy Mercies in Chriſt Jeſus, our only Saviour and Redeemer, Amen.

FINIS.